

Blue Ribbon Commission on Dirigo Health
Minutes of August 9, 2006 Meeting

The Blue Ribbon Commission on Dirigo Health held a regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, August 9, 2006 in the Cabinet Room of the Statehouse in Augusta, ME. Commission members in attendance were: Sandra Featherman (chair), David Brenerman, Joan Donahue, Kevin Gildart, Tammy Greateon, Merton Henry, Mike Keenan, Dr. Robert McAfee, Chip Morrison, Katherine Pelletreau, Ed Pineau, Keith Small, Gordon Smith, Dr. Peter Toussaint, Barbara Trafton, and Trish Riley, (ex officio member). Members absent were Joe Ditre, Carol Epstein, and Steven Michaud. Mary Anne Turowski joined by telephone.

The meeting began with Chair Featherman asking each member to introduce themselves and to indicate why they elected to serve on the Commission and what they hope to achieve. Trish Riley then read the Executive Order describing the Commission's charge.

The Commission then discussed operating procedures and agreed on the following:

- Minutes will be "high-level;" i.e., they will summarize the issues discussed and list when agreement was and wasn't reached, but they will not provide detail about who said what.
- Substitutes will not be allowed if a member cannot attend the meeting. Members should make every effort to attend all meetings. However, if they are unable: (a) members will be able to join by conference call, (b) meetings will be tape recorded, and (c) staff will investigate video-conferencing abilities.
- While all on the Commission agreed that it is worthwhile to strive for consensus, the Commission agreed to defer until later the details regarding whether "agreement" should be consensus, a simple majority, or a supermajority, as well as whether there will be majority and minority reports if the Commission is unable to reach consensus. All on the Commission agreed that it is acceptable for minutes to show vote tallies.
- All meetings will be open to the public; there will be no executive sessions. A memo from the Governor's chief counsel described Freedom of Access Act considerations.
- The Commission discussed public access and agreed that written public comments may be submitted through the staff to the full Commission. Once the Commission has issued a draft recommendation, it will consider the feasibility of a public hearing

The Commission discussed the issue of obtaining input from legislators. Specifically, staff has provided a list of questions to leadership and to members of the Insurance and Financial Services, Health and Human Services, and Appropriations and Financial Affairs committees. Staff will provide the Committee with a summary of responses, which will not list legislators by name. Full data – i.e., the list of questions and full legislator responses – will be provided to Commission members who request that information. However, legislators will not be named as confidentiality was assured them.

Trish Riley said that staff will prepare three papers for the Commission:

1. From the Muskie School: snapshot of how state initiatives to cover the uninsured are funded.
2. From the Muskie School: snapshot of state initiatives to provide access in the small group market.
3. From Cindy Mann (a lawyer and Medicaid expert from Georgetown University, Washington, DC): how states have used Medicaid, including how Dirigo has built on it and what opportunities may exist for future funding.

Staff will also provide information on DirigoChoice costs and funding needs.

Karynlee Harrington, Executive Director of the Dirigo Health Agency, provided a brief summary of the Cumberland Superior Court's recent decision validating the first Savings Offset Payment. A copy of the decision was included in Commission members' materials.

Following a break for lunch, the Governor came in to thank the members of the Commission for their work.

Members then requested a range of information for future meetings. Members who have materials they want to share with the Commission will send them electronically to staff so that staff can forward the materials to Commission members.

The meeting adjourned at 1pm.